

JUST THINK TWICE



A guide to using the *Just Think Twice* website
for middle and high school students



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An Introduction to the Just Think Twice Program

The *Just Think Twice* website (www.justthinktwice.com) was created by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), a government agency that enforces laws and regulations relating to the production and distribution of drugs in the United States. Another mission of the DEA is to discourage drug use among the U.S. population by sharing information about the risks of drug use and the effects of drugs on society. As part of this mission, the DEA created the *Just Think Twice* website as a resource for teens that provides accurate information about drugs—with the hope that this information will serve as the basis for healthy decisions.

The *Just Think Twice* teacher's guide provides lesson plans for students in grades 6–12 based on the website. The guide includes a module for each of the seven main sections of the website, and an introductory module that introduces the students to the website. Every module of the teacher's guide provides step-by-step instructions for how to conduct a lesson related to that section of the website with your class. The structure of each lesson is similar: an introductory discussion followed by a classroom activity that challenges students to use the website in different ways. The lesson concludes with a final discussion, and assessment questions and extensions to other areas of the curriculum are also provided. A quiz is also included at the end of each module.

Overall, this program encourages students to think critically about the messages they hear about drugs through the media or from peers. In particular, this program challenges the idea that drugs are harmless and reinforces the societal benefits of enforcing laws against drugs. Through this program, you can work with your students to help them learn the truth about drugs, enabling them to make healthy decisions in the future.

How to Use This Program

Basic and Advanced Tracks

The *Just Think Twice* program has been created so that it can be used by students of varying abilities. With the exception of the first module, each module of the program includes two possible activities that can be used to explore the website. The basic activity is intended for middle school students (grades 6–8), and the advanced activity is intended for high school students (grades 9–12). However, you should use your judgment in determining which activity to conduct. For instance, the advanced activity may be appropriate for a particularly sophisticated middle school classroom. In addition, some activities may be more relevant to your students, regardless of their grade level. You can feel free to choose either activity for any given lesson.

In general, basic activities require students to simply review and report on information from the website. On the other hand, advanced activities require students to manipulate and analyze the information in more complex ways. In addition, advanced activities may require more reading or writing by students.

Group and Individual Work

This guide suggests that the majority of the activities be conducted in small groups of three to five students. There are several advantages to this approach. First of all, the *Just Think Twice* website covers a large amount of information. When students work together on activities, one of them may see a crucial piece of information that others missed. In addition, having each group work on a different topic and then report back to the class allows each student to master their assigned topic, but still be exposed to the topics assigned to other groups. Secondly, most students find activities more enjoyable and engaging when working as part of a group. Finally, most schools have limited access to computers; group work may be necessary if students are required to share computers.

Despite the advantages of group work, teachers should use their own judgment when deciding if this is the best approach. If you find that working in groups is more of a distraction than an advantage, students may be better off working alone. Most activities in this guide can be easily adapted to be completed by individuals.

Time Requirements

Most lessons require one 50-minute class period to complete, not including the end-of-module quiz. A few exceptions are clearly marked in each lesson as well as in the module descriptions on page 4. In addition, timeframes for each activity are provided within the lessons. However, teachers should feel free to spend more or less time on an activity as they see fit.

Understanding the Organization of the Website

The website is divided into seven main sections. These sections are always listed in the top, left corner menu on every page on the website. Once you enter a main section, you see an introductory page and several subsections. Because the purpose of this website is to provide timely and relevant information about drugs, the titles and content of the subsections may change from time to time. For this reason, the teacher's guide generally does not refer to the subsections by name. To facilitate teaching the lesson, we recommend that you look at each main section before conducting each lesson and make a list of the subsections included. Having this list available should make it easier to assign topics to each student or group, as well as help you keep track of what is covered in each lesson.

Additional Information

Subsections are found in the main sections of the website (e.g., Costs to Society). Clicking on one of the subsections will bring up a page about that subtopic. On the left side of these pages, you typically have links to websites that provide additional information (see Figure 1). For example, the subsection "Drugged Driving," includes links to campaigns that educate students about this risk. Many of the linked websites can also provide valuable information for teachers. It is recommended that you visit these websites prior to the lesson, especially if it is an unfamiliar topic.

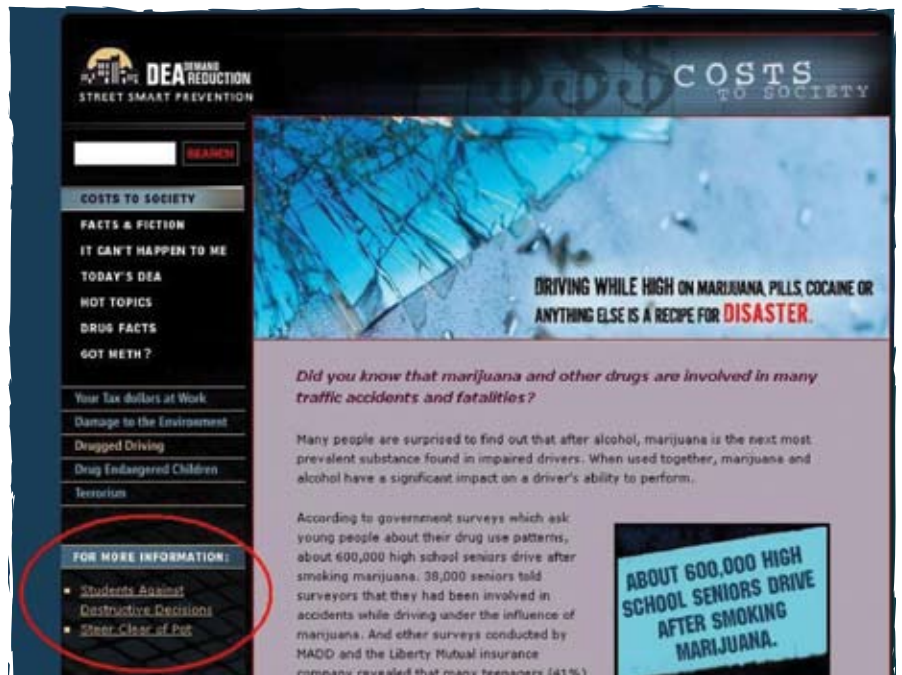


Figure 1: Finding Additional Information on the Just Think Twice Website

Other Tips and Suggestions

Brainstorming Web: Teachers can create a brainstorming web to help organize student responses. In this technique, teachers draw lines between connected concepts, showing that they are related. For example, if students are brainstorming about the consequences of drugs, the teacher might draw a line between a general

concept, like “crime,” and specific examples, such as “theft” or “drug trafficking.” In turn, the word crime might be connected to the word “social consequences.” Creating a web can prompt students to think of additional concepts, as well as to help them think about how these concepts are connected. This technique can also help students see that they already know more than they may have realized about a particular issue. In addition, brainstorming webs are especially helpful for visual learners who need to see the connections to understand them.

Using a White Board or Newsprint Pad: Because this program relies heavily on classroom discussions, it is important that all of the students are able to follow these discussions. Many students are visual learners, and hearing the discussion is not enough. However, these students will be better equipped to participate if you record key points on a whiteboard or newsprint pad. Similarly, we recommend writing down key terms and/or difficult vocabulary. In addition, writing the instructions for each activity will help visually oriented students understand what is expected, as well as serve as a reference for other students.

Teacher Learning: You may want to consider telling students when you learn something new from the website or through the lessons. Discovering that not even a teacher knows everything about drugs may help students feel more comfortable talking about what they have learned. In addition, it may help students realize there is a lot that can be learned through this program, which may increase their interest in the lessons and website.

Classroom Speakers: The website provides many pictures and stories of real people whose lives have been changed by drugs that are intended to help students understand the realities of drugs. This point can be made even more clearly if students have the opportunity to meet someone in person whose life has been affected by drugs. If possible, arrange to have a speaker in your classroom at some point while teaching this program. Ideas for possible speakers include someone whose life has been changed directly or indirectly by drugs, a researcher studying the effects of drugs on individuals or society, or a law enforcement officer.

Modules in the *Just Think Twice* Program

This program includes the modules listed below. It is recommended that you teach Module 1: Just Think Twice About Drugs before teaching any of the other lessons. In addition, we recommend that you teach Module 2: Drug Facts second. The remaining modules may be taught in any order. If your time is limited, you also have the option of choosing the modules that are most relevant for your students.

Module 1: Just Think Twice About Drugs

The purpose of this module is to increase student interest in learning more about the risks and consequences of drug use. This module also introduces students to the *Just Think Twice* website and gives them a brief look at the topics that are discussed.

Class time needed: 50 minutes on the day of the lesson.

Module 2: Drug Facts

The purpose of this module is to encourage students to learn the specific characteristics, effects, and risks of different drugs. Through the activities in this lesson, students will learn information that will enable them to make decisions that will help them stay healthy and safe.

Class time needed: Basic: 50 minutes on the day of the lesson. Advanced: 50 minutes on the day of the lesson (with homework), 20 minutes several days later.

Module 3: Costs to Society

The goal of this module is to increase awareness of the problems caused by drug use and to help students understand that drug use is not a victimless crime. In addition, this module is intended to help students recognize that laws against drug use and drug trafficking are important for protecting individuals and society as a whole.

Class time needed: 50 minutes on the day of the lesson.

Module 4: Facts & Fiction

The purpose of this module is to encourage students to question common myths about drugs by looking at facts that contradict them. This module also encourages students to look at the source of these myths and to think about who they can trust for information about drug-related topics.

Class time needed: Basic: 50 minutes on the day of the lesson. Advanced: 5 minutes 3 days prior to the lesson (with homework), 50 minutes on the day of the lesson.

Module 5: It Can't Happen to Me

The goal of this module is to vividly illustrate the negative consequences of drug use and to encourage students to think about how using drugs can affect their goals for the future. In addition, this module encourages students to think about what they can do to protect themselves from risky situations involving drugs.

Class time needed: 50 minutes on the day of the lesson.

Module 6: Stumble Weed

The goal of this module is to teach students about the way marijuana affects the brain and body, and how these effects can impact a person's ability to accomplish tasks such as driving or focusing on school work. This module also challenges students to question common myths related to marijuana.

Class time needed: 50 minutes on the day of the lesson.

Module 7: Hot Topics

The purpose of this module is to educate students about the latest news and information relating to drugs, and to increase student awareness of references to drugs in the media. This section is updated frequently and includes articles on the latest newsworthy drug topics.

Class time needed: 35 minutes on the day of the lesson, 20 minutes 1 week later.

Module 8: Got Meth?

The purpose of this module is to teach students about the effects of methamphetamine on the body and the high possibility of addiction. In addition, this module increases student awareness of the societal problems caused by methamphetamine.

Class time needed: 50 minutes on the day of the lesson.

Components of Each Lesson Plan

Introduction—introduces each topic and explains why it is important to discuss it with students.

Learning Objectives—lists the objectives of each lesson. After completing the lesson, the students should be able to achieve the goals stated by the objectives.

Materials—lists the materials that teachers should have available for use in each lesson.

Preparation—describes what teachers should do to prepare for each lesson.

Introductory Discussion—provides instructions for leading a discussion that introduces students to each topic. This section is written to encourage student participation instead of providing points for “lecture” by the teacher. Teachers should allow approximately 5–10 minutes for this discussion.

Activity—provides step-by-step instructions for conducting two activities that challenge students to use the website in different ways. Each lesson provides a *basic* and *advanced* activity. Teachers can choose either activity, depending on the needs and abilities of their students. Most activities require 30–35 minutes of class time.

Concluding Discussion—provides a list of questions to ask the class after they complete the classroom activity. These questions challenge students to think about the key points for each topic and structure integration of the learning from the lesson into a cohesive whole. Teachers should allow approximately 5–10 minutes for this discussion.

Assessment—provides points for observation by the teacher to determine if the students benefited from the lesson.

Extensions—includes two extension activities that reinforce and expand on the concepts taught in each lesson. These activities incorporate other subject areas, such as art or math.

Quiz—located at the end of each module to be used to assess student knowledge. You should decide which questions are appropriate for your class based on time constraints and ability level of students.